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RHMFISS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RHMFISS/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFISS/CDR USTRANSCOM SCOTT AFB IL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ABUJA 001508

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/13/2017
TAGS: [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: NIGERIAN PEACEKEEPING INITIATIVES PARALYZED BY
GOVERNMENT INERTIA

REF: A. A: ABUJA 01320
[1](#)B. B: ABUJA 01265

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Classified By: Ambassador John Campbell for Reasons 1.4 (b and d).

[1](#)1. (S//NF) SUMMARY: There has been little progress in recent months within the Government of Nigeria (GON) to expand its peacekeeping role in Darfur and Somalia under the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM). The GON has been without ministerial leadership since late May and civil service Permanent Secretaries leading ministries in the interim are reluctant

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to make decisions on their behalf. Furthermore, Yar'adua and his advisers appear ill-equipped to pick up the slack. Accordingly, this dearth of effective centralized decision-making capacity within the GON is likely to continue to delay GON cooperation on international peacekeeping missions. END SUMMARY.

Nigerian Military Stalled on Peacekeeping

[1](#)2. (C//NF) There has been little progress in recent months within the GON to expand its peacekeeping role in Darfur and Somalia. As of mid-July, the Nigerian battalion designated for deployment in Somalia, the last battalion in the training pipeline, still needed extensive ground and peace keeping operations training. Nigerian Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) General Azazi described the unit as "on stand-by" but as having significant deficiencies (reftel A).

[1](#)3. (C//NF) The Nigerian military lacks the equipment to independently deploy troops to Darfur and Somalia. The Nigerian Navy owns two blue-water vessels, one of which is not operational due to lack of spare parts. The Nigerian Air Force owns nine C-130 aircraft but eight are in various states of disrepair and cannot fly. Its one functional C-130 has no props and undergoing periodic depot maintenance (PDM) in France, which may take as much as six months to complete. As of mid-July, the Nigerian Air Force was considering

selling three non-functional C-130s to a private buyer, proceeds from which may allow it to purchase functional aircraft. The GON relied on the UK for assistance in recent deployments to the peacekeeping theater and requested approximately USD 1 million from the UK to fund transportation to Somalia for the battalion, but did not provide an expected deployment date. The GON also considered deploying troops using Nigerian commercial air carriers.

14. (C//NF) DATT reports that the Nigerian army has requested training under the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program for six battalions during calendar year 2008 - 4 for peacekeeping operations in Sudan, 1 for Somalia, and 1 as stand-by for Somalia. Under this schedule, a fully-trained peacekeeping battalion would be available for deployment during third-quarter 2008 at the earliest. However, the Nigerian army's ACOTA training record for 2006 is not encouraging and keeping to this schedule may prove difficult. In 2006 the first battalion to undergo ACOTA training had its commander replaced immediately after completing training. The second battalion arrived late and unprepared for training. Three company commanders failed to report and the battalion had insufficient ammunition to conduct live-fire training exercises. The third battalion also arrived late and was undermanned and lacked sufficient weapons or vehicles to progress beyond individual skills training exercises. (COMMENT: At this time we doubt Nigeria's designated AMISOM battalion can maintain self-sufficiency for the six months required by the African Union (AU) and have no indication as to when it is scheduled to deploy to Somalia.)

15. (C//NF) Regarding domestic Nigerian peacekeeping operations, the Nigerian Joint Task Force (JTF) in the Niger Delta is fractured along service lines, with the army, navy, and air force engaging in separate operations. DATT reports the new JTF commander is still assessing this situation and has not yet taken action to harmonize services under his

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command. One oil company security representative also noted the JTF's effectiveness is hindered by endemic corruption and JTF complicity in illegal oil bunkering.

Centralized Decision-Making Absent

16. (C//NF) Although unable to hide glaring deficiencies, the army says it is ready to deploy peacekeeping troops but has received no "political direction" to do so. Likewise, the police remain largely directionless under an acting Inspector General (IGP) who is preoccupied with reorganizing the force and addressing allegations of corruption at all levels. Both the military and police are also likely to experience wholesale retirements in the near future.

17. (C//NF) The GON has been without ministerial leadership since late May and civil service Permanent Secretaries leading ministries in the interim are reluctant to make decisions on their behalf. With no ministers in place, both senior military and civilian career personnel are becoming increasingly frustrated. The Nigerian Senate is slowly confirming ministerial candidates, and protracted negotiations and petitions over ministerial and senior executive positions and their portfolios threaten to slow the process even further.

18. (S//NF) In the absence of ministerial leadership, Yar'adua and his advisers appear ill-equipped to pick up the slack. While the Yar'adua administration appears to be making the right noises on a variety of public policy issues, its capacity to implement policy remains lacking. According to a well-placed source within the Presidential villa, Secretary to the Government of the Federation Babagana

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Kingibe is stymied as his memos and recommendations are piling on the President's desk. The same source claimed that Yar'adua is aloof. He "retires at 4:00pm" and does not work after afternoon prayers, possibly due to poor health.

Strategy/Recommendation

¶9. (S//NF) With no ministers in place and civil service leadership reluctant to act, it is virtually impossible to engage the GON on these issues at this time. We also assess that additional high-level USG pressure on the GON to honor its AMIS and AMISOM commitments would be ineffective because Yar'adua's fledgling administration is already struggling to meet its myriad public policy demands. A/S Frazer raised Nigeria's commitment to AU peacekeeping missions with President Yar'adua during their May 29 meeting, and Yar'adua pledged to review the issue (reftel B). However, a dearth of effective centralized decision-making capacity within the GON is likely to continue to delay GON cooperation on international peacekeeping missions.

¶10. (C//NF) We will continue to engage the Nigerian military, as appropriate, to reiterate USG offers for materiel support for peacekeeping and training missions. The US military is currently coordinating plans with EUCOM for a joint training operation with the Nigerian military. However, the Nigerian military continues to delay in identifying specific materiel deficiencies that the USG may be able to meet (reftel A).

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